

18. The coupling device according to claim ¹⁵~~8~~, wherein said receptacle forms a part of a coupling socket having an open side adapted to receive therein an optical fiber plug-in connector *ma*

Remarks:

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1-18 are now in the application. Claims 1 and 4-6 have been amended. Claims 10-18 have been added.

In item 4 on page 2 of the above-identified Office action, claim 1 has been rejected as being indefinite under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

More specifically, the Examiner has stated that said transition areas" should be "said transition regions".

Applicants appreciate the indication of the error and it has been corrected.

It is accordingly believed that the claims meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Should the Examiner find any further objectionable items, counsel would appreciate a telephone call during which the matter may be resolved. The above noted changes to the claims are provided

solely for the purpose of satisfying the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112. The changes are neither provided for overcoming the prior art nor do they narrow the scope of the claims for any reason related to the statutory requirements for a patent.

In item 7 on page 3 of the Office action, claims 1-3 have been rejected as being anticipated by Hoffer et al. (4,798,440) under 35 U.S.C. § 102. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claim 1 defines a coupling device having a receptacle with inside contact areas contacting the intermediate faces of an optical fiber holder without play.

There is necessarily a play between the respective faces of the receptacle 12 and the housing member 14 taught by Hoffer et al.. There will always be a play because of tolerances obtained during the manufacturing process. To have contact without play, it would be necessary for the contact areas to exert a force on the intermediate areas, and this is not taught by the reference.

In item 9 on page 3 of the Office action, claims 7-9 have been rejected as being obvious over Hoffer et al. (4,798,440) under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Applicants respectfully traverse.

These claims would not be obvious for the reasons given above in regard to claim 1.

In item 10 on page 4 of the Office action, claims 4-6 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The indication of allowability is appreciated and claims 4-6 have been amended as suggested by the Examiner.

Support for added claims 10-18 can be found by referring to claims 7-9 as originally presented.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claims 1 or 4-6. Claims 1 and 4-6 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art and since all of the dependent claims are ultimately dependent on one of claims 1 and 4-6, they are believed to be patentable as well.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-18 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, he is respectfully requested to telephone counsel so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

Petition for extension is herewith made. The extension fee for response within a period of one month pursuant to Section 1.136(a) in the amount of \$110.00 in accordance with Section 1.17 is enclosed herewith.

A check in the amount of \$80.00, pursuant to Section 1.16(b), has been enclosed herewith for the fee required to present one independent claim in excess of three.

Please charge any other fees which might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,



For Applicants

Mark P. Weichselbaum
Reg. No. 43,248

MPW:cgm

January 29, 2001

Lerner and Greenberg, P.A.
Post Office Box 2480
Hollywood, FL 33022-2480
Tel: (954) 925-1100
Fax: (954) 925-1101